



City of Seattle

Department of Planning & Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 3012640

Applicant Name: Brad Hinthorne, Perkins+Will Seattle, for 1519 Minor LLC

Address of Proposal: 1519 Minor Avenue

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a 7-story building with 111 residential apartment units, 9 live-work units, 3,200 sq. ft. of retail/commercial at ground level, and parking for 21 vehicles partially below-grade. Proposal includes 3,000 cu. yds. of grading. Existing structure to be removed.

The following approvals are required:

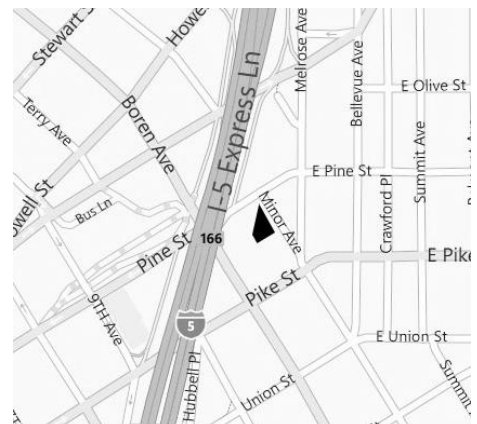
SEPA Environmental Determination – Chapter 25.05 SMC.

Design Review – Chapter 23.41 Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)

SEPA Determination: ☐ Exempt ☐ DNS ☐ MDNS ☐ EIS
 ☒ DNS with conditions
 ☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition,
 or another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The site lies on a block that forms the western edge between Downtown Seattle and the Capitol Hill neighborhood, an edge that was less pronounced prior to the 1960s when Interstate 5 cut a broad swath primarily through older residential apartment buildings that gradually yielded to more substantial commercial building that came to mark the Downtown area. In particular, a priority of the Pike/Pine neighborhood is to promote the development that maintains and preserves the physical and social character of an east/west corridor that was Seattle's original auto row.



Parking for the proposed new development will be located partially below grade and will be accessed from the alley.

The 14,453 square foot site is located at 1519 Minor Avenue in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood. The geometry of the property is trapezoidal, converging to a point at the north corner intersection of Minor Avenue and Pine Street. The only street frontage is Minor Avenue. Otherwise, the site abuts an existing building on one side, an existing alley, and Pillars Park, which is maintained by the Seattle Parks Department. The site is one block east of Interstate 5 and Minor Avenue is sloped along the eastern site boundary, traversing a twelve foot vertical elevation change as it rises from Pine Street to the south.

The project proposes to demolish the existing single-story office building (1957) that is approximately 8,000 gross sq. ft. elevated above open parking underneath the building at grade (22 stalls). There are also about 6 surface parking stalls located on the site. All existing parking is accessed off of Minor.

The residential portion of the 7-story proposed structure would consist of approximately 111 apartment units and 9 live/work units at level 1. The Minor Avenue elevation contains more commercially oriented uses including; retail space, the residential entry, and spaces accessory to the live/work units. The design solution provides a highly visible and prominent retail/café space at the northern vertex which turns the corner and fronts the adjacent park plaza for a distance of 30'. Although there is no requirement for it, parking for 21 vehicles would be available in partially below-grade parking.

The site is located on City of Seattle Zoning Map 110. It is zoned N3CP-85 and is in the Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District and the Pike/Pine Urban Center Village and is subject to the Pike/Pine Urban Center Village Design Guidelines.

The project site will be required to dedicate to the City for alley purposes a two-foot strip along the west property line abutting the eastern edge of the alley right-of-way. The dedication is a partial dedication from 2 feet below to 16 feet above the established alley surface grade as the areas above and below the dedication have been determined not needed for utilities or other alley purposes.

Seattle department of Transportation (SDOT) has determined that the project will be required to provide an easement of 1.5' at street level along Minor Avenue to accommodate a new six foot wide sidewalk.

Public Comments

Public comment was invited at the initial Master Use Permit applications and at the two Design Review public meetings. Comments from the Design Review meetings are noted within the Design Review process summaries which follow. There was limited attendance at public meetings and comments were primarily concerned with maintaining commercial use along Minor Avenue.

ANALYSIS – DESIGN REVIEW

Early Design Guidance Meeting, September 28, 2011

DESIGN PRESENTATION

Erik Mott of Perkins+Will Architects made the presentation to the Board and members of the public attending the meeting. After explaining opportunities offered, constraints of the site, and the general objectives of the intended program, he identified individual design guidelines from the Pike/Pine Urban Center Village Guidelines which the design team thought of special importance for the proposal, namely A-1, A-2, A-5, A-8, A-10, B-1, C-1, C-3, D-1 and D-7. Four different massing schemes were presented by the applicant. The first essentially filled the site. The second created a south-facing podium courtyard. A third scheme created a west facing podium courtyard with two facades at right angles above the podium taking advantage of the generally unobstructed western views. A fourth scheme created a southeast terrace which was aid to establish a more sensitive scale response to neighbors to the south and to the east. This preferred scheme allowed for “a more gracious” main entry along Minor Avenue and for three street-level dwelling units that opened directly onto the street. A chamfered north corner allowed opportunities for interesting transitions at Pine Street to the park area bordering the proposed structure on the west.

PUBLIC COMMENT

After asking some clarifying questions of the applicant, the Board elicited comments from members of the public (eight signed in to become parties of record) attending the Early Design Review meeting. The following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- One long-time activist as well as area developer addressed the proposed three street-level residential units, noting that they should be designed so as to be converted into true commercial spaces sometime down the line. Minor Avenue at this location, she noted, “wants to be a commercial street.” She also pointed out the disruptive effect of the curbcut and vehicular entry along Minor Avenue, suggesting that at the very least the driveway width needed to be minimized and reduced to a width less than that shown.
- Another neighbor and business owner in the immediate area was troubled by the proposed parking and the green wall/screen that would separate it from the park. While agreeing that the park needed some greening, he noted that the proposal for green screens that were operable and provided for opening the garage level to the park was confusing as presented and in need of fuller explanation and demonstration.
- Another area developer stressed the concept of needing more commercial development along the street.
- Another area resident admitted to being overwhelmed by the proposed height of the development, the “downtown creep” perceived, and asked whether the project would not benefit by a floor being lopped off the top. She also questioned the viability of the proposed street-level residential units.

- A member of the public reiterated the feeling that Minor Avenue should not be considered a residential street, thought that the idea of a restaurant open to the park, while OK in the abstract, wasn't very cognizant of the prevailing freeway noises, and questioned the need for any more markets (in response to one of the options suggested for opening up the garage screens on occasions).
- Other comments: touched again on the relative height and bulk of the building, given the actual build out of the area and zoning to the east that would allow only buildings twenty feet lower; spoke to views that would be blocked for others; affirmed the need for some kind of greening along the edge of Plymouth Pillars Park; commented on the narrowness of Minor Avenue and the impacts any narrowing of the street would have on traffic in the area.

Priorities and Board Recommendations

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines of highest priority for this project.

Site Planning

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility. The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

The project appears to respect the relationship with Minor Avenue and is encouraged to continue in the direction it is going. By the next meeting the applicant needs to provide more substantial information regarding SDOT's inclination to narrow the travelling portion of the roadway, to extend the sidewalk beyond the existing curb line along the west side of the road, to establish a one-way traffic flow.

A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

The applicant had not chosen this to be a priority. In addition to providing elements that would invigorate the activity on Minor Avenue, the board would like to make sure that there is an invigoration along the Park/I-5 façade of the building.

A-6 Transition Between Residence and Street. For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.

The applicant had not chosen this to be of high priority in guiding the design. The Board discussed the tension between a more suburban set back from the street on Minor and a more urban gesture that might hug the sidewalk. If the entries were to be set back, a more generous setback (at least 6 feet) might be needed to provide proper privacy. The Board also believed that the common amenity area above the street-related units should find a way to connect more directly with the street.

- A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access.** Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties, and pedestrian safety.

The applicants had also chosen this guideline to be of highest priority for the success of the proposal. The reduction in size of the garage entry if it were to remain on Minor Avenue and its unobtrusive integration into the street-level façade would be important for a successful design. Members of the Board raised questions regarding the appropriateness of street rather than alley access to the parking area.

- A-10 Corner Lots.** Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

The applicant had chosen this guideline to be of highest priority. The Board felt that the treatment of the northeast corner would be critical in “wrapping” the lower façade around to the Pillars Park area and tying the building to this area.

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

- B-1 Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility.** Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

The Board members were generally agreed that the best scheme was that of the preferred design, but members raised questions regarding the need for both horizontal and vertical modulation, both subtle and not-so-subtle, that might serve to reduce perceptions of excessive height and bulk in the structure.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

The Board did not suggest that context should drive the design but did suggest that there might be datum points and more subtle elements in structures along the street that might be referenced in the final design. The Board further suggested that elements of scale were applicable to each of the visible facades. There was an abundance of clues in existing older buildings in the area of how to achieve a good human scale in design.

- C-3 Human Scale.** The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements, and details to achieve a good human scale.

The design of the ground floor of new development should include pedestrian-oriented architectural elements. A rhythm of building modulation should be comparable or compliment nearby existing buildings where appropriate; there was an abundance of clues in existing older buildings in the area of how to achieve a good human scale in design.

- C-4 Exterior Finish Materials.** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

Without going beyond the characteristics of durable, maintainable and attractive, the Board urged a pallet of materials that would allow for an effective layering of the west façade both at the garage and upper levels and would allow for a good human scale to be achieved elsewhere.

- C-5 Structured Parking Entrances.** The presence and appearance of garage entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.

The Board was particularly concerned, as had been members of the public, that the façade along Marion Avenue not yield too much to the functionality of getting vehicles in and out of a garage.

D. Pedestrian Environment

- D-4 Design Parking Lots near Sidewalks. Screening of Parking.** For secured surface parking lots, the use of cyclone wire or chain-linked fencing should be avoided and instead, the artistic use of mesh fencing, fabricated iron, decorative hardscape and landscape materials including perimeter trees are encouraged.

This guideline was chosen by the Board to emphasize the need of the design team to have a well thought out and convincing scheme for the screening of the parking area from the park and a fuller program for occasional alternative uses of the parking area space by the next presentation to the Board.

- D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures.** The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.

Again, in choosing this Guideline as one of highest priority, the Board expressed concern for the appearance of the parking garage and how it would relate to the entire façade expression along the Pillars Park edge and enhance the pedestrian experience of comfort and safety there.

- D-7 Personal Safety and Security.** Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.

(See the comments above under D-5.)

E. Landscaping

- E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites.** Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.

Street trees and an enhanced planting strip area are encouraged along Minor Avenue. The applicant is encouraged to work with SDOT regarding the expansion of the sidewalk and planting area in an effort to enhance the pedestrian experience there. The applicant is likewise encouraged to work with Parks and Recreation (and WSDOT as needed) to provide landscaping and greening to the edge where the west façade meets Pillars Park. The park clearly needs greening, but the Board thought it unclear how effective the green screen along the park's edge would be.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departures were discussed:

The Code requires alley access to parking, although the proposal might qualify for an exception from alley access. In that case no departure to acquire parking off Minor Avenue would be needed. Otherwise a departure for access off Minor Avenue might be requested.

The Land Use Code would require that on Minor Avenue the individual street-level unit entries would need to be set back 10 feet from the property line, and the applicants were proposing a less-than 10-foot setback.

The Board expressed a mixture of feelings between dislike and tolerance regarding the potential of a request for a departure for access off Minor Avenue. They indicated they would possibly look more favorably toward the requested departure providing the applicants offer more details regarding the potential for alley access and minimize the maw of the parking entry on Minor Avenue if that would turn out to be the only alternative.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended that the project should move forward to MUP Application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting.

The Board indicated that at the next meeting they would expect to see much more fully developed and detailed renderings of the basic massing scheme shown the Board as the preferred alternative. In particular, the presentation should clarify and address the following major concerns of the Board:

- As presented by the applicants the structure had two faces, one to Capitol Hill and one to Downtown. The Board was unanimous in stating that the entire design should be that of a Capitol Hill building, not a Downtown building.
- The massing of the building should fit its Capitol Hill and Pike/Pine context.
- Since no parking is required for the project, parking should be approached as a building amenity, should not drive but complement larger design-decisions and its impacts within and without the structure should be minimized.
- Successful treatment of the park-level park/parking edge of the structure was essential for the overall effectiveness of the design, and although there was no Code requirement for an intervening (between parking and park) use along this edge, something creative, if not original, and something undoubtedly involving a greening element, should happen at this edge.

- Along the Minor Avenue façade and street edge the following elements require thought, discernment and careful design decisions: 1) at the street level, the size and impacts of entry and curbcut for parking amenity access and egress, if this remained the only viable alternative; 2) along the street-level, the impacts on comfort, privacy and safety of any residential units with proposed direct sidewalk access; 3) the desirability and possibilities of providing direct street access to any internal or internal/external community amenity area; 4) imparting a sense of human scale along the street level while also imparting through modulation, datum lines, setbacks, changes in materials, or other design elements or treatments, a compatible sense of scale that mitigates any sense of overweening massing of the upper portions of the structure ; 5) working with SDOT, determine configurations and resolve issues regarding width and directionality of Minor Avenue, sidewalk width, street trees and other plantings.

Recommendation Meeting, December 7, 2011

DESIGN PRESENTATION

Erik Mott of Perkins+Will Architects made the presentation to the Board and members of the public attending the meeting. He explained how the project had been designed in response to the Board's recommendation at the EDG meeting that the design provide for a flexible, more commercially design to accommodate live-work or retail spaces along Minor Avenue, by providing a two-story component along the south (uphill portion of the site), designed to be compatible in scale with neighboring buildings. By taking vehicular access off the alley, the project was able to provide essentially continuous glazing along Minor Avenue, allowing for a number and variety of entry points along that street.

While there had been some discussion of providing openings into the day-lit garage along Pillars Park to the west, the proposal had settled upon a discrete, impermeable edge between building and Park, but with an architectural response that was "active, dignified, durable, green, artful and illuminating" (refer to the packet for the December 7, 2011, available at the DPD Design Review web site).

At the northernmost point of the site the proposed design presents a two-story space ideally suited to a retail/café use. Generous glazing provides for daylight and views and converts into a visible lantern after dark. A chamfered edge above the double-high ground floor would allow the residential cladding panels to visually float above the glass base and give accent to the edge that fronts onto Pine Street. The overall façade is overlaid with sets of sunshades and layers of colorful compositional grids, shifted floor to floor to create a sense of dynamic movement to the overall composition.

The presentation confirmed that SDOT had concurred with the desire to reduce Minor Avenue to a 20-foot roadway, allowing for a 5.5-foot planting strip and street trees along the west side of the street. The new structure would be set back 1.5 feet along the Minor Avenue property line, allowing for a 6-foot sidewalk.

PUBLIC COMMENT

After asking some clarifying questions of the applicant, the Board elicited comments from members of the public. The following comments, issues, and concerns were raised:

- Applauded the change from residential to live/work on Minor Avenue.
- Liked the art panel treatment along the lower park-facing façade.
- Generally complimentary regarding massing, crisp detail, vivid color palate.
- Still thought the height of the structure too tall for the site.
- Other comments: touched again on the relative height and bulk of the building, given the actual build out of the area; still thought number of parking spaces being proposed inadequate.
- Commented on the narrowness of Minor Avenue and the impacts any proposed narrowing of the street would have on traffic in the area.

DEPARTURES

Although no departures from development standards had been identified at the EDG meeting, the following departures were described and requested at the Recommendation Meeting:

- 1) a small portion of the garage area protruded above the ground on the Minor Avenue facing façade, without any intervening uses being provided between the street and the parking as required by Code (SMC 23.47A.032.B.1.b);
- 2) due to the northwards downward slope on Minor Avenue, one of the three live/work spaces did not meet the requirement for a non-residential use to have a floor to floor height of 13 feet (SMC 23.47A. 008.B.2.b).

Board Deliberations

1. The Board recommended approval of the requested departures.
2. The Board expressed their approval of the canopy at the entry to ensure the creation of a “distinct” entry.
3. The Board expressed their overall approval of the vivid color palette and the modern, crisp detailing of design. They liked the architectural screens proposed along the park, indicating that the architectural screens were more appropriate than green screens, and that they worked well with the hard, concrete language that exists in the park currently. They expressed their liking of the modulation created by the sun shades on the west façade.

The longest portion of the deliberation was given to a discussion of the cladding material and the Board’s unwillingness to give their approval to cladding that was painted and was not “integrally colored.” They were troubled that the vividly colored “red” building would soon become a “pink” building. The solution they offered at the end of their deliberations was to give approval of the design as presented and of the departures requested, conditioned upon the applicants working with the land use planner to settle upon a cladding materials that was *integrally colored*. It was their collective judgment that this would help to ensure that the structure-as-built would not be a simulacrum with but a vague semblance to the “crisp,” “vibrant,” and “vividly colored” proposal that had been presented to them at the meeting via paper and power point.

Departures Granted

- reduced floor to floor distance for (1) bay of commercial space along Minor Avenue. The remaining two bays would meet code minimum 13' floor to floor height.
- small area of non-conforming use at Minor (the garage intersected Minor); (this was later determined not to apply since the way 'at grade use' is defined on a sloping slight does not include the area where the garage abuts the street).

Conditions of approval

- Provide integrally colored panels for exterior enclosure with modern expression (open joints)

Therefore, the proposed design is **APPROVED** as presented at the December 7, 2011, Design Review Board meeting, together with the requested departure (s), and the Boards recommended condition.

CONDITIONS

Design Review conditions are listed at the end of this report.

ANALYSIS – SEPA

This analysis relies on the *Environmental (SEPA) Checklist* for the proposed development submitted by the applicant on October 27, 2011, which discloses the potential impacts from this project. The information in the checklist, supplemental information provided by the applicant, project plans, and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The Seattle SEPA ordinance provides substantive authority to require mitigation of adverse impacts resulting from a project (SMC 25.05.655 and 25.05.660). Mitigation, when required, must be related to specific adverse environmental impacts identified in an environmental document and may be imposed only to the extent that an impact is attributable to the proposal. Additionally, mitigation may be required only when based on policies, plans, and regulations as enunciated in SMC 25.05.665 to SMC 25.05.675, inclusive, (SEPA Overview Policy, SEPA Cumulative Impacts Policy, and SEPA Specific Environmental Policies). In some instances, local, state, or federal requirements will provide sufficient mitigation of a significant impact and the decision maker is required to consider the applicable requirement(s) and their effect on the impacts of the proposal.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority. The Overview Policy states in part: “*where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation,*” subject to some limitations. Under specific circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7) mitigation can be required.

The policies for specific elements of the environment (SMC 25.05.675) describe the relationship with the Overview Policy and indicate when the Overview Policy is applicable. Not all elements of the environment are subject to the Overview Policy (e.g., Traffic and Transportation). A detailed discussion of some of the specific elements of the environment and potential impacts is appropriate.

Short-Term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected; decreased air quality due to suspended particulates from demolition and building activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code regulates site excavation for foundation purposes and requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of construction. Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The Building Code provides for construction measures in general. Finally, the Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the City.

Most short-term impacts are expected to be minor. Compliance with the above applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse short-term impacts to the environment. However, impacts associated with air quality, noise, and construction traffic warrant further discussion.

Air Quality

The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality and will require permits for removal of asbestos or other hazardous substances during demolition. The applicant will take the following precautions to reduce or control emissions or other air impacts during construction:

- *During demolition, excavation, and construction, debris and exposed areas will be watered as necessary to control dust; a truck wash and quarry spall areas will be provided on-site to treat construction vehicles prior to their exiting the site, and truck loads and routes will be monitored to minimize dust-related impacts.*
- *Using well-maintained equipment and avoiding prolonged periods of vehicle idling will reduce emissions from construction equipment and construction-related trucks.*
- *Using electrically operated small tools in place of gas powered small tools wherever feasible.*
- *Trucking building materials to and from the project site will be scheduled and coordinated to minimize congestion during peak travel times associated with adjacent roadways.*

These and other construction and noise management techniques shall be included in the Construction Impact/ Noise Impact Management Plan to be submitted for approval prior to issuance of construction permits.

Noise

The project is expected to generate loud noise during demolition, grading and construction. Compliance with the Noise Ordinance (SMC 25.08) is required and will limit the use of loud equipment registering 60 dBA (not including construction equipment exceptions in SMC 25.08.425) or more at the receiving property line or 50 feet to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on weekdays, and between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays. This condition may be modified by DPD to allow work of an emergency nature or allow low noise interior work after the exterior of the structure is enclosed. This condition may also be modified to permit low noise exterior work (e.g., installation of landscaping) after approval from DPD. Construction noise is within the parameters of SMC 25.05.675.L, which states that the Noise Ordinance provides sufficient mitigation for most noise impacts. Any need to address specific additional noise restrictions because of particularly sensitive sites nearby will be addressed in the Construction Impact/Noise Impact Management Plan to be approved by DPD and SDOT prior to issuance of any construction permits.

Traffic and Circulation

Site preparation would involve removal of the existing asphalt pavement and excavation for the foundation of the proposed building and below grade parking garage. Approximately 3,000 cu. yds. of material would be excavated and removed from the site. Existing City code, Regulating the Kind and Classes of Traffic on Certain Streets (SMC 11.62) designates major truck streets which must be used for hauling and otherwise regulates truck traffic in the city. The proposal site has relatively direct access to both Highway 99 and Interstate 5 and traffic impacts resulting from the truck traffic associated with grading will be of short duration and mitigated by enforcement of SMC 11.62.

Traffic control would be regulated through the City's street use permit system, and a requirement for the contractor to meet all City regulations pertaining to the same. Temporary sidewalk or lane closures may be required during construction. Any temporary closures of sidewalks would require the diversion of pedestrians to other sidewalks. The timing and duration of these closures would be coordinated with SDOT to ensure minimal disruptions.

Compliance with Seattle's Street Use Ordinance administered by Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is expected to mitigate any adverse impacts to traffic which would be generated during construction. of this proposal and no further conditioning is necessary.

Long-Term Impacts – Use-Related Impacts

Land Use

The proposed project is consistent with the *City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan*. No significant adverse land use impacts have been identified and therefore no mitigation is warranted or required.

Traffic and Transportation

The Environmental Checklist includes a Transportation Impact Analysis prepared by Heffron Transportation Inc. The *1519 Minor Avenue Project Transportation Impact Analysis*, dated October 26, 2011, was prepared and submitted in support of MUP 3012640. This study documents background transportation conditions in the site vicinity, presents trip generation estimates for the project, and evaluates anticipated impacts to the surrounding transportation system including the project's effect on intersection traffic operations, transit, non-motorized facilities, and parking.

In project year 2013, the project is expected to generate 240 vehicle trips to the surrounding street system per day, including 15 vehicle trips during the AM peak hour and 23 during the PM peak hour. As demonstrated in the traffic impact analysis, off-site traffic operations would be essentially unaffected by the proposed project. However, as the proposed project consists of residential development, the majority of trips would be made by residents who would be familiar with area traffic patterns, and would likely make full use of the street grid that is available to them at in this area. During periods in which the southbound movement at Pike Street/Melrose Avenue/Minor Avenue would experience higher levels of congestion, it is likely that travelers to the site would choose paths that do not go southbound through this intersection.

In addition, as part of the Design Review process, the applicant voluntarily relocated the proposed garage entry on the alley to reduce potential conflicts with pedestrian traffic along Minor Avenue. Sight lines from the alley to Pike Street are limited by the adjacent buildings, which are built to the property lines. Drivers exiting the alley must pull onto the sidewalk in order to have adequate sight lines to Pike Street. During the peak hours, traffic turning left from the alley onto Pike Street could experience delays similar to those at the adjacent non-signalized intersection. At these times, motorists could make a right turn onto Pike Street and return to the east via Boren Avenue.

According to the Heffron updated study, the proposed project would result in a very small increase in overall traffic volume generated from the site. It would provide 21 parking spaces on site to serve its demand. The project is not expected to adversely impact traffic operations, safety, parking, transit, or non-motorized transportation facilities. No traffic mitigation under SEPA is warranted or required.

Transportation Concurrency

The City of Seattle developed a Transportation Concurrency policy as part of its Comprehensive Plan, which was updated with the more recent Director's Rule 5-2009. Within the transportation concurrency policy, the City has defined 30 screenlines, each of which encompasses one or more arterials in the city. Screenline analysis is a transportation-planning tool that groups key arterials of a transportation network together to measure the operating conditions of a corridor. For example, the Ship Canal functions as a screenline to measure north-south travel north of downtown Seattle. The City has established a level of service standard for each screenline, which is measured by the volume-to-capacity ratio (v/c ratio). The project passes concurrency if the v/c ratio with the addition of a proposed project's traffic is lower than or equal to the LOS standard for the screenline.

Due to the project site's close proximity to I-5, there is only one screenline that is near the proposed site in Seattle that would validate an evaluation—Screenline 12.12 (East of CBD). This screenline was evaluated for concurrency. The results in Table 8 show that there is reserve capacity across this screenline in both directions; therefore, transportation concurrency would be met for this project.

Parking

The proposed development will provide approximately 21 below ground parking spaces. The project will eliminate a surface parking lot off the alley currently accommodating 28 vehicles, resulting in a net on-site parking decrease of 7 spaces. Based on the Seattle Parking Code and Land Use Code, the proposed development is not required to provide any parking spaces for the development; residential uses are not required to provide parking, nor are retail uses under 7,500 sq. ft.

Noise

Noises consistent with an urban residential building within a densely populated urban center may be generated as a result of this project. This noise generation is not expected to be significant and therefore no mitigation through SEPA is warranted or required.

Height, Bulk, and Scale

A project that is approved pursuant to the Design Review process is presumed to comply with the City's SEPA policies regarding height, bulk, and scale. DPD has found no evidence that height, bulk, and scale issues were not adequately addressed through the Design review process and compliance with the Design Guidelines. As such, no additional mitigation regarding height, bulk, and scale is warranted or required.

DECISION – STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- [X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c).
- [] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c).

The proposed action is **APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS.**

CONDITIONS – SEPA

Prior to Issuance of any Construction, Shoring or Grading Permits

1. The applicant shall submit for review and approval a Construction Impact/ Noise Impact Management Plan, as referenced in the decision above, to the Department of Planning and Development. The plan shall identify management of construction activities and noise, including construction hours, worker parking, traffic issues and anticipated street, alley and sidewalk closures.

During Excavation, Demolition, and Construction

2. Debris and exposed areas shall be sprinkled as necessary to control dust; a truck wash and quarry spall areas shall be provided on-site prior to the construction vehicles exiting the site if scoop and dump excavation is not used; and truck loads and routes shall be monitored to minimize dust-related impacts. *Due to the small size of the site, an on-site truck wash and quarry spall may not be necessary or appropriate as the applicant may use “scoop and dump” excavation. This would entail using an excavator tractor to move excavated material to trucks queued along the street. If scoop and dump excavation is used, then a truck wash and quarry spall shall not be required.*

CONDITIONS-DESIGN REVIEW

Prior to Certificate of Occupancy

3. Record a sidewalk easement along Minor Avenue.
4. Provide external cladding material for the building that is integrally colored.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: April 12, 2012
Michael Dorcy, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development